

# The Art Institute of Atlanta

## IMD 360 Non-Linear Narrative

Section A Summer 2005  
Course Outline

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**Please note:** The contents of this course outline may be revised by the instructor during the quarter. The changes may be made to improve and facilitate the students' achievement of the competencies for the course.

The Art Institute of Atlanta  
**IMD 360 Non-Linear Narrative**

Section A  
Course Outline, Summer 2005

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## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Building on skills learned in the IMD 260 class, students conceptualize and develop a storyline for a non-linear narrative and develop a storyboard. They integrate interactive experiences within this narrative to create an immersive user experience. The course emphasizes selection and use of appropriate development tools and techniques.

### ***Credits***

4 Credits, 6 Hours

### ***Prerequisite***

IMD 260 Introduction to Authoring

## **OBJECTIVES**

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Develop and implement a unique interactive narrative concept
- Identify technical problems to solve in order to implement an interactive, non-linear narrative
- Use various types of media in concert to effectively communicate a single concept/narrative
- Explain concepts of interactive narrative
- Discuss the role of narrative in contemporary culture
- Utilize scripting and programming languages to author interactive narratives
- Incorporate rich media forms and storytelling

## **COURSE INFORMATION**

### ***Textbooks***

Meadows, Mark Stephen. *Pause & Effect: the Art of Interactive Narrative*. New Riders; ISBN: 0-7357-1171-2

### ***Supplemental Materials***

Blank CD-ROMs with jewel cases to store your work and deliver your projects.  
Sketchbook sizable enough for detailed drawings, glued in items, and code ideas.

### ***Technology***

Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, Macromedia Flash, Macromedia Director, Adobe After Effects, QuickTime Pro, digital cameras, digital video cameras, flatbed scanner, Microsoft Word

### ***Course Online***

<http://www.classbot.com/>

## Room/time

	Day/Time	Room
Class:	Thursday 6 – 9:40pm	416a

## Instructor

Name:	Aarron Walter
Phone:	770-689-5006
Email:	aarron@classbot.com
Office hours:	Wednesday 12 - 2 PM Thursdays, 5 - 6 PM Or By Appointment Room 217

## COURSE GRADING

The final grade will be based on the following scheduled activities:

Activity / Assignment	Title	Points	%
Assignment 1	Jump page	50	50
Assignment 2	Research paper for interactive portrait/essay	150	15
Assignment 3	Interactive photo essay	200	20
Assignment 4	Experimental interactive narrative	200	20
Assignment 5	Storyboard interactive portrait/essay	100	10
Assignment 6	Interactive portrait/essay	200	20
Assignment 7	Midterm Exam	100	10

## Grading Scale

%	Grade	%	Grade	%	Grade	%	Grade	%	Grade
96-100	A	88-90	B+	78-80	C+	66-70	D+	=< 60	F
91-95	A-	84-87	B	74-77	C	61-65	D		
		81-83	B-	71-73	C-				

## Submitting Assignments

Every student will create a personal online “jump” page for this class. The URL for this page should be posted in the Class Bot drop box by the specified deadline.

All assignments need to be uploaded to a web server by the stipulated time/date and linked from your personal “jump” page. Each student’s jump page must have the following information on it:

- o Your Name
- o Course number, name and section
- o Instructor’s name
- o Assignment titles
- o Your email contact link.
- o Links to all assignments (typically the assignment title)

## Web Server

Please note that all your assignments need to be submitted online. Please remember that servers can go down. If your primary server goes down, please upload your work to a backup server (you could use one of the free web hosting services for this).

## ***Late Assignments***

If an assignment cannot be accessed online on the due date, it will not be graded (resulting in a 0 for the assignment). If an assignment is not received on time, it cannot be resubmitted.

## ***Grading Policy***

Please note that per the department policy, in order to take the portfolio class and graduate, all students in the Interactive Media Design program need to have a grade of D or higher in all core courses (courses beginning with IMD).

## **AIA ATTENDANCE POLICY**

It is the goal of this policy to improve the academic performance of students in the classroom by stressing the importance of course attendance and reinforcing the work-ready expectations of employers for employee attendance.

Students should be prepared to start the quarter the first day of classes and to drop/add courses early in the first week of the quarter to minimize absences.

The following attendance requirements are in addition to and amend those currently published in the AIA Student Handbook and Daily Planner.

### ***Course Attendance Policy***

- Students are required to attend all class meetings, to arrive on time, and to stay for the full duration of the class.
- Students arriving 20 minutes after the start of each class will be marked absent. Students who leave class before the class is over and without the approval of the instructor will be marked absent.
- Students who accumulate more than three absences may be dropped from the course and a grade of “FS,” Fail/Suspension, will be recorded for the course. Students who are suspended receive no refund for the course.

There are no excused absences. Students may verify their attendance with the instructor of the course. In the event a student is suspended from a course and believes an error in recording attendance has been made, he or she should first contact the instructor.

### ***Attendance Appeals Process***

Students may appeal a course suspension. Such appeals must be made in writing to the Registrar. Appeals will only be considered when the absences were beyond the control of the student and **all** absences are fully documented.

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

As a member of the academic community, students are expected to recognize and uphold standards of intellectual and academic integrity. Under all circumstances, students are expected to be honest in their dealings with faculty, administrative staff, and fellow students. In speaking with any member of the college community, students must give an accurate representation of the facts at hand. Students are required to refrain from any and all forms of dishonorable or unethical conduct related to academic work. In class assignments, students must submit work that fairly and accurately reflects their level of accomplishment. Any work that is not the product of the student's own efforts is considered dishonest. Engaging in academic dishonesty can have serious consequences for the students. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Cheating
- Plagiarism
- Submission of the same work in two or more classes without prior approval of the faculty members of the classes involved.
- Submission of any work (full or partial) not actually produced by the student.
- Submission of any work without clear acknowledgement (reference/credit) of the original author or creator of work.

Students proven to have been dishonest in submitting or presenting their work in this class will receive the F (fail) grade for the class. Record of this incident will also be kept in the student's file. If such an incidence occurs and you would like to file a written appeal, you may do so with the academic director of the department.

## DISCLAIMER

All work designed and developed in this class should carry the following statement (typically displayed at the bottom of the page):

**This interactive media project was created by students for educational purposes at The Art Institute of Atlanta and is in no way intended for commercial gain or as a source of public information.**

## SCHEDULE

Date		Reading to be Completed Before Class	Assignments Due	Topic/Activity
Thurs. July 14 (wk 1)	Class			Introduction to Course Policies, and Syllabus. Discuss examples of interactive narratives. Discuss course assignments. Development and Practice Design Considerations Principles of narrative Principles of interaction
Thurs. July 21 (wk 2)	Class	Pause & Effect Ch. 4 <i>Practice</i> p. 212 – 238 Pause & Effect Ch. 1 p. 1 – 36 <i>Theory</i>	<b>Assignment 1:</b> Jump Page <b>Homework:</b> Topic for assignment 2 (research paper)	Work on script and storyboard for assignment 1 (interactive photo essay) Show and discuss current photos, conceptualization, and planning. Emotional and dimensional perspectives The changing definitions of narrative. The Story Arc Plots and use case scenarios.
Thurs. July 28 (wk 3)	Class	Pause & Effect Ch. 1 <i>Theory</i> p. 37 - 69	<b>Assignment 3:</b> Interactive Photo Essay	Critique Discuss assignment 4 Principles of interaction Designing for interaction Interactive narrative structures Designing image and icon for interactivity.
Thurs. Aug 4 (wk 4)	Class	Pause & Effect Ch. 2 <i>Image (2D)</i> p. 72 - 123	<b>Assignment 2:</b> Research Paper	Examine examples of existing experimental narrative projects Points of view in narrative The generation of meaning Present research paper to class.
Thurs. Aug 11 (wk 5)	Class			<b>Midterm Exam</b>
Thurs. Aug 18 (wk 6)	Class		<b>Assignment 4:</b> Experimental Interactive Narrative	Critique
Fri. Aug 25 (wk 7)	Class	Pause & Effect Ch. 3 <i>Dimension (3D)</i> p. 154 - 179	<b>Assignment 5:</b> Storyboard	Critique Principles of narrative in place and space. Designing place and space for interactivity.
Fri. Sept 1 (wk 8)	Class			Student progress reports
Wed. Sept 8 (wk 9)	Class		<b>Assignment 6:</b> Interactive Portrait / Essay	Review course material. Students turn in course CD-ROMs Critique

# ASSIGNMENTS

## *Assignment 1. Jump Page*

Create a jump page to point to all work created for this course. At the end of the quarter, this entire web site must be burned to CD-ROM and submitted in a jewel case labeled with your name, course title, quarter, and date.

### **Marking Criteria:**

**Total Points 50**

Visual design and professional presentation (30)

Quality Assurance (20)

## *Assignment 2. Research paper for Interactive Portrait / Essay*

This paper will provide the foundation of content and perspective for your final assignment, the interactive portrait/essay. View the web sites, [secondstory.com](http://secondstory.com) and [terraincognita.com](http://terraincognita.com) for ideas and inspiration.

Select and research a topic of your choosing with the purpose of providing multiple perspectives of that topic. Due to time constraints, the topic must be a very specific aspect of an individual or event. Rather than choosing the Civil War, try choosing a specific location on a particular day.

Another example topic might be Vincent Van Gogh. Rather than approach the entire life of the artist, try choosing a single painting and providing multiple perspectives on that work. Consider the opinions of the art historian, the art collector, a 9-year-old museum attendee, a 21<sup>st</sup> century painter, or Van Gogh himself. Research each perspective and bind their stories together into a cohesive whole.

Conduct research using video or audio interviews, the library, rental movies, and online discussion groups or web sites. Remember, your paper is for gathering content for an interactive narrative. The scope of the paper should be approximately 7 pages not including your title page or bibliography. Use 11pt. Times New Roman, with a line spacing of 1.5. Include images, headings and sub-headings to organize your paper. Site your sources in your bibliography using MLA style.

### **Marking Criteria:**

**Total Points 150**

Strength of story (50)

Use of narrative techniques (50)

Production values (50)

## *Assignment 3. Interactive Photo Essay*

Create a photo essay consisting of no less than 10 still images that you have shot personally with a digital camera. The technology that you use is up to your choosing. Create a story with your images that can stand up to non-linear viewing. You may use simple animation, transitions and ambient sound to help create context for your photo essay, but these must remain as a supporting element and not over-ride the photo(s) in importance. You are not allowed to use any music, video, or graphics. The photos should tell the story. You may not use any text, other than the single word used for the title of the piece. You may choose to either keep the title present at all times or hide it after the splash screen. You may use text if text or words happens to be in your photos.

### **Marking Criteria:**

**Total Points 200**

Strength of story (100)

Innovative approach (50)

Production values (50)

### ***Assignment 4. Experimental Interactive Essay***

Building upon the photo essay, create an experimental narrative that uses any media types to convey some form of narrative. As with the photo essay, your focus is to tell some form of story. There should be depth of content beyond mere eye-candy. This piece is an interactive experimental narrative with only one constraint; there must be no less than 10 nodes of interaction. Incorporate the concepts of interaction design discussed both in the readings and in class, to engage the viewer. Maintain awareness of how each media type is functioning both alone and juxtaposed with the other pieces of your narrative. Please do not use media types such as video, without considering how it fits into your overarching plot.

#### **Marking Criteria:**

**Total Points 200**

Strength of concept (100)

Use of media types (50)

Production values (50)

### ***Assignment 5. Storyboard***

The storyboard is to communicate the “look and feel” of your interactive portrait. It should help us to understand the experiences that your project will create. Each panel in the storyboard should be accompanied with a paragraph explaining the current scene. The storyboard will be submitted as a PDF file linked from your jump page.

#### **Marking Criteria**

**Total Points 100**

Completeness of visual experience (70)

Attention to detail (20)

Presentation, spelling, and grammar (10)

### ***Assignment 6. Interactive Portrait / Essay***

Based upon your research paper, develop a compelling and innovative approach to communicating the various perspectives of your topic. The technology that you choose to use will be based upon the needs of your assignment. You may need to do some research on coding techniques required to accomplish your plan.

Using as many media types as appropriate, create an engaging rich media experience that both informs and entertains on the subject of your research paper. Be clear on how you use text, images, sound, and animation to convey perspective. Consider carefully how you incorporate the concepts of interaction design such as, observation, exploration, modification, and reciprocal change as discussed in both the readings and in class.

#### **Marking Criteria**

**Total Points 200**

Strength of story (100)

Innovative approach (100)

# STUDY QUESTIONS

## *Week 1 Study Questions*

1. What is a plot flow diagram?
2. According to the author of our text, what is the purpose of narrative?
3. Define the term epiphany.
4. Define the term foreshadowing.
5. Compare and contrast emotional perspective to dimensional perspective.
6. What are the two most important commodities of the Internet?
7. How will trends in interactive narrative relate to trends in literature?
8. Why does the author of our textbook feel that current implementations of interactive narrative are falling short of its capabilities?

## *Week 2 Study Questions*

9. According to the Perspectivist approach, what are the four aspects of interactive narrative?
10. Is text an interface?
11. Who coined the term, “The medium is the message?”
12. Define the term “plot”.
13. Define “Vanishing-point” perspective.
14. Define the term “Dramatic arc”.

## *Week 3 Study Questions*

15. The author of our text considers running an application as an interactive form of reading. Explain his perspective on this topic.
16. Define the term metaphor.
17. Define the term semiotics.
18. Discuss the relationship between a “sign” and the “signified”.
19. Our author feels that a use-case scenario is to software as a plot is to a story. Explain his perspective.
20. What is the purpose of a “moral” to a story?

## *Week 4 Study Question*

21. Explain the Aristotelian definition of “plot”.
22. Draw a diagram of the Freytag plot triangle.
23. Define the term “Desis”.
24. Define the term “Peripeteia”.
25. Define the term “Denouement”.
26. Explain the phrase, “The plot thickens” as it relates to the Freytag triangle.

## *Week 5 Study Questions*

27. According to the author there are three principles of interaction: input/output, inside/outside, and open/closed.
28. Compare and contrast input vs. output.
29. Compare and contrast inside vs. outside.
30. Compare and contrast open vs. closed.
31. Define the four steps of interaction: Observation, Exploration, Modification, and Reciprocal Change.

## *Week 6 Study Questions*

32. Define the term “Icon”.
33. List four methods for manipulating the experience of time within a narrative.
34. Define the term “Dwell-time”.
35. Define the term, “Episodic structure”.
36. Compare and contrast “Impositional” interactive narratives to “Expressive” interactive narratives.
37. Compare and contrast a “nodal” plot structure to a “modulated” plot structure.

### ***Week 7 Study Questions***

38. How does perspective relate to story-telling?
39. Compare and contrast the following points-of-view: 1<sup>st</sup> person, 2<sup>nd</sup> person, and 3<sup>rd</sup> person.
40. List the six categories for gutter space in comics?

### ***Week 8 Study Questions***

41. Compare and contrast “Foveal” vision to peripheral vision.
42. Define the term, “Saccadic” eye movement.
43. List four guidelines of interaction design.
44. Define the term “Mimesis”.